

MARVEL®

#4 IN A FOUR-ISSUE LIMITED SERIES

©1994 MARVEL COMICS GROUP



TM

60c

U.K. 25p
CAN. 75c

4

JUNE

HERCULES

OF POWER

**GODHOOD'S
END!**



HotComic.net

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

HERCULES

PRINCE OF POWER

THE PLACE IS OLYMPUS.
THE TIME IS 401 YEARS
FROM TODAY. THE EVENT
IS THE LAST MOMENT IN
THE HISTORY OF THE
GREEK GODS!

STATEMENT:
I HAVE FOUND HIM!
HIS LIFE SIGNS ARE
LOW! THIS MAY BE
THE LAST RECORD
I MAKE... OF THE
LIFE OF HERCULES!



A PEARL of GREAT PRICE!

CHRISTIE SCHEELE
COLORIST

RICK PARKER
LETTERER

BOB BUDIANSKY
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

BOB LAYTON
EVERYTHING ELSE!

HERCULES Vol. 2, No. 4, June, 1984. Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Garth, President, Stan Lee, Publisher, Michael Hobsen, Vice-President, Publishing Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 357 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Published monthly. Copyright © 1984 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price 60¢ per copy in the U.S. and 75¢ in Canada. Printed in the U.S.A. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. All promised characters featured in this issue, and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP.



HE REMEMBERS HAPPIER TIMES WITH FRIENDS THAT EASED HIS EXILE FROM OLYMPUS...

... FRIENDS LIKE SKYPPI, A SHAPE-CHANGING FUGITIVE FROM THE SKRULL EMPIRE--

--AND THE RECORDER, THE ROBOTIC HISTORIAN OF THE COLONIZERS OF RIGEL! TOGETHER, THEY SHARED GLORIOUS ADVENTURES.

IT WAS ONLY AFTER THEY WERE ARRESTED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES ON THE STAR-STATION PHILORD THAT THEIR FATES TOOK A BRIM TURN...

WHILE INCARCERATED IN THE STATION'S BRIG, HERCULES EXPERIENCED A PROPHETIC NIGHTMARE--

HIS FATHER ZEUS HAD SLAIN HIS BRETHREN GODS, DRAWING THEIR POWERS BACK TO HIMSELF!

UPON AWAKING, HE MADE A MOST HORRIFYING DISCOVERY--

--HE, AN IMMORTAL, HAD GROWN OLDER!

HE RESOLVED TO RETURN TO OLYMPUS TO SEEK THE CAUSE OF HIS AGING, BUT FIRST--

--HE HAD TO OVERCOME MANY OBSTACLES THAT BARRED HIS WAY--

--SUCH AS THE CRAZED SKRULL-KILLER KNOWN AS RED WOLF WHO WAS BENT ON SKYPPI'S DESTRUCTION!

HAVING RESOLVED THAT CONFLICT, HE AND HIS COMPANIONS HASTENED TO REACH OLYMPUS--

--ONLY TO BE DETOURED TO TITAN, ONE OF THE MOONS OF SATURN, BY HIS OLD COMRADES, MENTOR AND EROS!

THERE HERCULES FOUND HIS FELLOW OLYMPIAN, APOLLO, WHO HAD ATTEMPTED TO ESCAPE THE WRATH OF ZEUS! BUT ZEUS HAD STRIPPED HIM OF HIS IMMORTALITY AND BEFORE HE COULD SPEAK OF WHAT HAD TRANSPIRED... APOLLO DIED OF OLD AGE.



AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, SHRECK, THE LAST WORSHIPPER OF THE DEMI-GOD, THANOS, THE DECEASED CONSORT OF DEATH, CHOSE THAT MOMENT TO TRY TO CARRY OUT HIS MASTER'S WISH FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF TITAN!

USING THE POWER OF THE NEGA-BANDS WHICH HE HAD STOLEN FROM THE LONG-DEAD CAPTAIN MARVEL, HE ATTACKED!

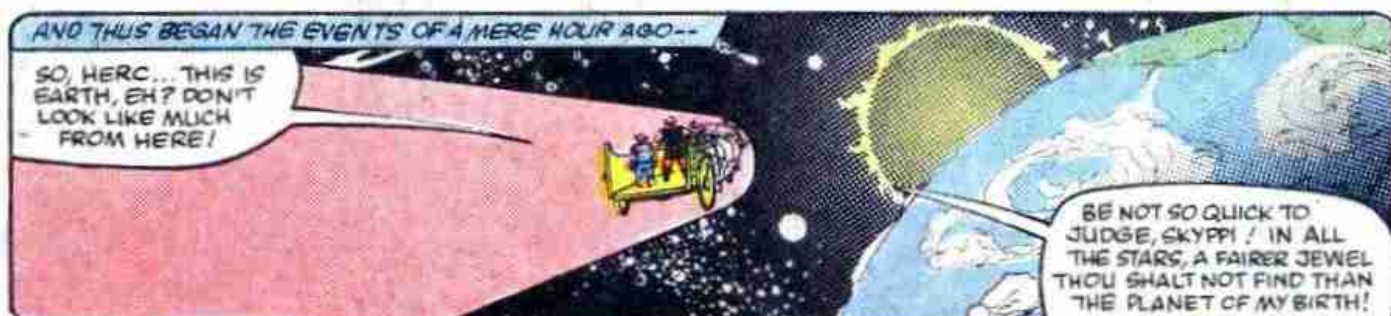


ONLY THE COMBINED STRENGTH OF HERCULES AND HIS COMRADES THWARTED SHRECK'S MAD SCHEME.



MEANWHILE, ISAAC, TITAN'S PLANETARY COMPUTER, HAD DISCOVERED THAT ONLY ONE BEING REMAINED ALIVE ON OLYMPUS!

DESPITE HIS FRIENDS' PROTESTS, HERCULES WAS DETERMINED TO CONFRONT THAT BEING!



AND THUS BEGAN THE EVENTS OF A MERE HOUR AGO--

SO, HERC... THIS IS EARTH, EH? DON'T LOOK LIKE MUCH FROM HERE!

BE NOT SO QUICK TO JUDGE, SKYPI! IN ALL THE STARS, A FAIRER JEWEL THOU SHALT NOT FIND THAN THE PLANET OF MY BIRTH!



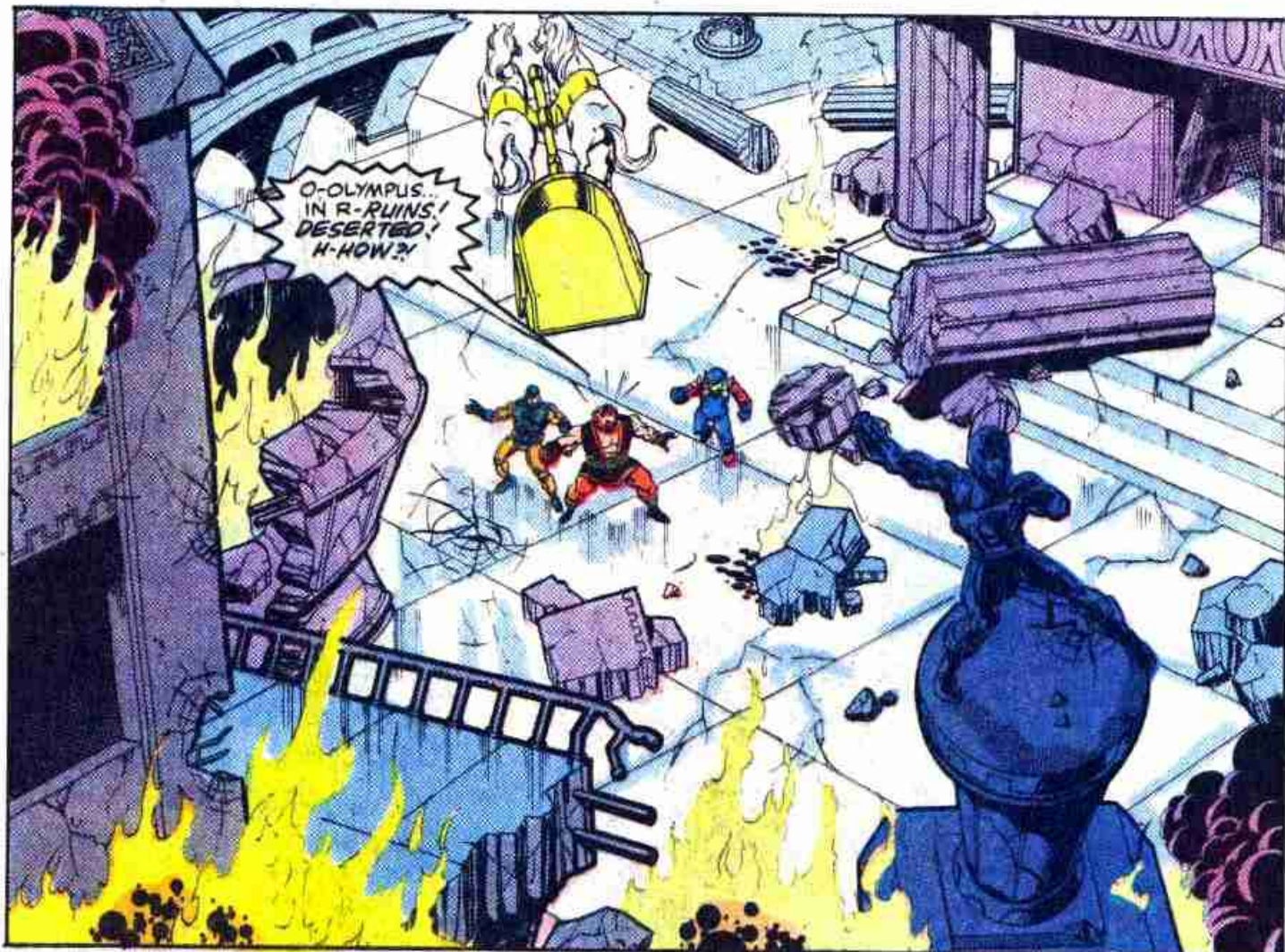
ATOP YON MOUNTAIN, HIDDEN FROM THE EYES OF MORTAL MEN, LIE THE GLORY AND SPLENDOR THAT IS OLYMPUS... MY HOME!



BUT AS THE TRIO LANDS, WHAT THEY SEE BEFORE THEM LEAVES THEM STUNNED--

N-NAY! B-BYALL THAT IS HOLY--!

SAY... W-WHAT HAPPENED HERE?











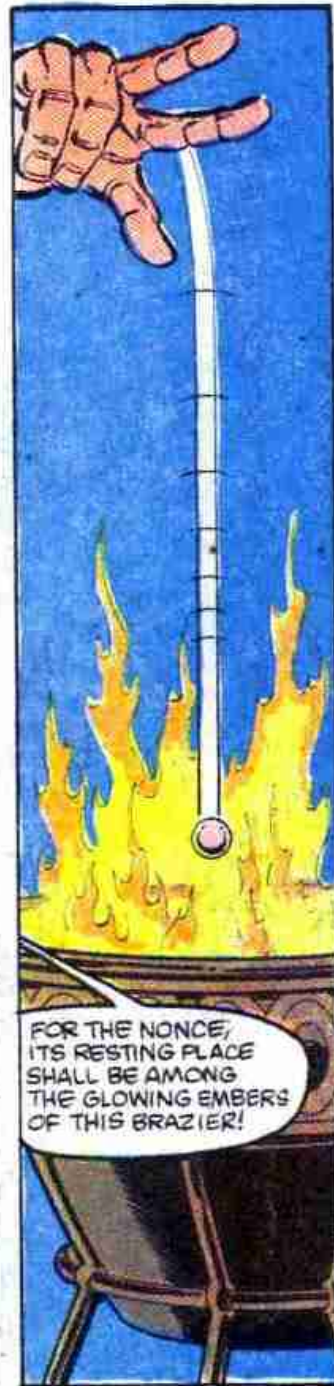
BY MY HAND, I CREATE
A GIFT, THY
IMMORTALITY!
ENDLESS LIFE--



--ENCASED IN
THE ESSENCE
OF THIS PEARL!



ALL THOU
MUST DO IS
DEFEAT ME
IN COMBAT
AND IT
IS THINE!



FOR THE NONCE,
ITS RESTING PLACE
SHALL BE AMONG
THE GLOWING EMBERS
OF THIS BRAZIER!

"WITHIN AN HOUR, THE FIRE WILL
CONSUME IT FOREVER!"



"THOU HAST THAT SPAN OF TIME
TO VANQUISH ME!"



BE IT AN HOUR OR TEN THOUSAND,
I WILL NOT TAKE UP ARMS AGAINST THEE,
LORD ZEUS! THOU ART MY BELOVED FATHER!







STATEMENT:
I AM IN THE PRE-
DESIGNATED POSITION!
NOW... SKYPPI! S-SKYPPI!

AT THAT
MOMENT---

HIYA, GOOD-LOOKIN'!
WANNA HORSE AROUND?



STATEMENT:
THIS IS SO
UNDIGNIFIED!

CONFRONTED BY ITS
MIRROR IMAGE, THE
INORGANIC CONSTRUCT
IS MOMENTARILY CON-
FUSED, GIVING THE
TRANSFORMED SKRULL
TIME--



--TO ACT!

WHUMP

HAVE
A NICE
TRIP,
SUCKER!



HEH-HEH! THE
OL' OKEY-DOKE
NEVER FAILS! WHAT
A MARBLE-HEAD!
LET'S GO HELP
HERO, RECCY!

WHUMP





NAY, FATHER! 'TIS NOT! WITH THE WISDOM THOU ONCE POSSESSED, THOU SENT ME AWAY... TO THE STARS! I HAVE RETURNED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT NO LIFE IS LESS SACRED THAN ANY OTHER!

THAT IS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THOU HAST TAUGHT ME, MY LORD! THE SELF-SAME LESSON THAT THOU NOW, IN THY MADNESS, SEEK TO DESTROY!



REASON SHALL PREVAIL, FATHER! I SHALL RETURN WITH THE CURE FOR THY INSANITY! I SWEAR IT! BUT FIRST I MUST--







A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY--

STATEMENT:
WE MUST
CONTINUE, SIR!
WE ARE NOT FAR
FROM OUR
VEHICLE NOW!

I DO NOT
UNDERSTAND...M-
MY FATHER COULD
HAVE DESTROYED
ME WITH BUT A
PASSING THOUGHT,
Y-YET HE CHOSE TO
CONFRONT ME ON A
PHYSICAL LEVEL!
'TIS STRANGE!

NO MATTER! MY
STRENGTH DOOTH
RETURN AS WE
SPEAK! I WILL NOT
HAVE MY FRIENDS
FIGHT MY BATTLES
IN MY STEAD!

GET THEE TO THE
CHARIOT, RECORDER!
I SHALL FIND SKYPP!
AND RETURN!

INTERROGATIVE:
BU-BUT... MY PRO-
GRAMMING STATES
I MUST OBSERVE
YOU AT ALL TI--

DO AS I COMMAND,
RECORDER!

AT THAT
MOMENT--

WHO DARES
TO DECEIVE
ALMIGHTY ZEUS!

SHOW THYSELF
FOR WHAT THOU
TRULY BE!

BARELY CONSCIOUS, THE SKRULL REVERTS TO HIS
TRUE FORM--

AH, MY SON'S
PET TOAD YET
LIVES! THOU
SHALT SOON WISH
THAT MY CREATURE
HAD FULFILLED
ITS APPOINTED
TASK, LITTLE
ONE! THOU
SHALT DIE FOR
THY IMPUDENCE!

NAY/
NO
MORE!







ZEUS KNEELS, CRADLING HIS WOUNDED SON IN HIS ARMS.

PAY HEED TO MY WORDS, SON! FOR MY TIME ON THIS PLANE OF EXISTENCE IS SHORT! THERE COMES TO EVERY RACE... AN ENDING! POWERS HIGHER THAN OURSELVES HAVE EVER SO DECREED! MANKIND, WHOM WE WATCHED OVER FOR LO THESE THOUSANDS OF YEARS, HATH FULFILLED ITS DESTINY! THE TIME OF GODS HATH LONG PASSED AWAY!

BUT FOR THEE... A GREATER DESTINY AWAITS! ALL THAT HATH TRANSPIRED, THINE EXILE FROM OLYMPUS AND OUR BATTLE TODAY, WAS BUT A TEST!

A-A TEST? I UNDERSTAND NOT, FATHER.

IT WAS THE EDICT OF THE FATES, THAT ONE OF US, BORN OF GOD AND MORTAL, SHALL SURVIVE. THIS ONE SHALL BE THE PATRIARCH OF A NEW RACE!

I BANISHED THEE TO THE STARS TO PREPARE THEE FOR THAT DESTINY--

--FOR SO HEADSTRONG WERT THOU THAT I FEARED THOU WOULDST FAIL TO PROVE WORTHY OF THAT HONOR!

B-BUT...THY MADNESS...THE BATTLE?

STEEL IS FORGED BY FIRE, MY SON! TO DISCOVER THY TRUE METTLE, THOU WERT PUSHED TO THE BRINK OF MURDER! ONLY THEN COULD IT BE KNOWN IF HUMILITY AND COMPASSION WERE TRULY THINE!

B-BUT THOU DIDST SLAY THY FELLOW GODS, DIONYSIUS, ARES, THE REST?

NAY, HERCULES! THERE ART WORLDS THOU HAST NOT DREAMT OF! THEY DWELL NOW IN ANOTHER PLACE... ANOTHER REALITY! AND NOW, I MUST TAKE LEAVE TO JOIN THEM! MY TASK IS COMPLETE!

WHAT AM I TO DO, MY LORD?

THE CHOICE IS THINE!

BEHOLD! THE BRAZIER STANDS BEFORE THEE! THY SALVATION! THOU MUST DECIDE ON THY OWN DESTINY! ALL BEINGS HAVE THAT FREEDOM! THOU ART NO DIFFERENT!

"THOU CANST JOIN THY BRETHREN IN THE WORLD BEYOND THIS--"

"--OR FIND A NEW BEGINNING AMONGST THE STARS! AS I SAID... 'TIS THINE TO CHOOSE!"



MAYHAPS... IT WOULD BE BETTER TO LEAVE THIS LIFE! TO FADE AWAY WITH THE GLORY THAT ONCE WAS OLYMPUS!



Y-YES... MAYHAPS... I... I...



NAAYY!



HE TOUCHES THE PEARL AND INSTANTLY IS MADE YOUNG AND WHOLE ONCE MORE!



EPILOGUE:

MINUTES
LATER--

SKYPP! IT
DOETH WARM MY
HEART TO SEE
THEE ALIVE! I
THOUGHT THOU
WERT SLAIN!

THE OLD MAN
MUSTA PINCHED
A NERVE OR SOME-
THIN! I'VE SURE
GOTTA DOOZY
OF A HEADACHE,
THAT MUCH IS
FER SURE!

WOULD
SOMEONE
PLEASE
TELL ME
WHAT THE
FROPP HAS
BEEN GOIN'
ON?

ALL IN
GOOD TIME,
SKYPP! BUT
FOR NOW, WE
MUST TAKE
OUR LEAVE
FROM THIS
PLACE!
COME,
FRIENDS!

IT MUST BE
TOUGH FER YA,
HERC! I MEAN,
COMIN' HOME
AND FINDIN' OUT
YA DON'T HAVE
ONE ANYMORE!

AYE, SKYPP!
BUT THERE COMES A
TIME WHEN ONE MUST
FACE HIS DESTINY
WHATEVER IT BE!

SO...ONWARD FRIENDS!
I HAVE A DESTINY TO
FULFILL AND A NEW RACE
THAT AWAITS ABORNING!

OH, BOY!
CAN I
WATCH?

TFW